

Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 21 October 1993



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statistics

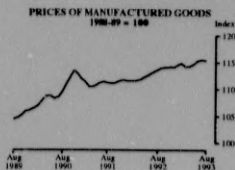
Oil products keep manufacturing price index in check

The price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry decreased by 0.1 per cent in August 1993.

The decrease in the index in August was mainly due to falls in the prices of refined petroleum products and refined gold. Small price falls were also recorded for about 20 per cent of the items in the index.

These price falls were partly offset by small price increases for about one-third of the items in the index.

The Manufacturing Division index increased by 1.6 per cent between August 1992 and August 1993.



PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS
AUGUST 1993
Percentage change

Manufacturing sector	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Food, beverages and tobacco	0.6	5.0
Transport equipment	-0.4	2.6
Other industrial machinery	0.5	1.5
Clothing and footwear	-0.1	0.9
Fabricated metal products	0.2	0.4
Chemicals and chemical products	0.0	-0.5
Basic metal products	-0.6	-1.5
Petroleum products	-4.8	-10.0
Total manufacturing	-0.1	1.6

For further information, order the publication *Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia (6412.0)*, or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

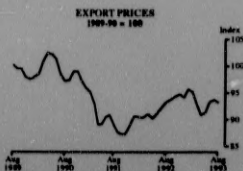
Export prices dip slightly

Export prices fell by 0.5 per cent between July and August 1993.

Price decreases were recorded for about 40 per cent of the items in the index. The main contributors to the decrease were gold, wheat and wool.

These decreases were partly offset by small price increases for a wide range of items.

Export prices fell by 0.1 per cent between August 1992 and August 1993.



Price changes for major commodity groups are shown below.

EXPORT PRICES, AUGUST 1993

Percentage change

Commodity group	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Gold, diamonds and coin	-4.5	16.1
Prepared food stuffs	0.6	12.5
Live animals and animal products	2.0	9.9
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	0.3	6.3
Products of chemicals or allied industries	-0.8	2.7
Vegetable products	-1.9	-0.1
Machinery and appliances	0.2	-0.1
Mineral products	-0.6	-2.4
Base metals	-0.5	-9.9
Wool and cotton fibres	0.7	-15.4
All groups	-0.5	-0.1

For further information, order the publication Export Price Index, Australia (6405.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Housing finance trend makes it eight rises in a row

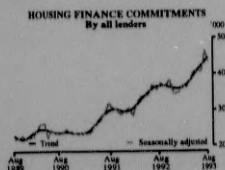
The upward trend in housing finance, which began in January 1993, continued in August with a 2.2 per cent increase over July in the provisional trend estimate for dwelling units financed. A reversal of this upward trend would now require a 7 per cent fall in the seasonally adjusted figure for September 1993.

The provisional trend estimates for all three housing categories showed upward movements, with 'construction of dwellings' up 3.0 per cent, 'newly erected', 2.2 per cent, and 'established dwellings', 2.0 per cent. The category 'construction' continues an upward movement which began in November 1991, while for the two other categories, the upward movement began in January 1993.

HOUSING FINANCE, AUGUST 1993

Number of dwellings

	Established dwellings	Construction of dwellings	Newly erected dwellings	Total
% change from July 1993				
Trend	2.0	3.0	2.2	2.2
Seasonally adjusted	-7.9	-3.9	2.8	-6.7
Unadjusted	1.9	4.7	5.2	2.6
% change from August 1992				
Trend	20.7	23.6	12.5	20.9
Seasonally adjusted	14.7	22.4	8.2	15.9
Unadjusted	19.1	27.2	11.3	20.3



The seasonally adjusted estimate for the number of dwellings financed in August 1993 fell by 6.7 per cent over July 1993, but was 15.9 per cent more than in August 1992.

Unadjusted, total dwellings financed in August 1993 were 2.6 per cent more than July 1993, and 20.3 per cent more than August last year.

Of the total number of dwellings financed in August 1993, lending institutions reported that 15.1 per cent were being refinanced, compared with 12.1 per cent in August 1992.

For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance For Owner Occupation, Australia* (5609.0), or contact Mark Dennis on (06) 252 7117.

Australian Capital Territory Business Indicators

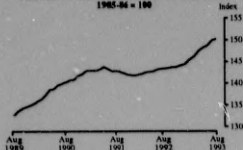
ACT Business Indicators is a new summary publication providing the latest data and percentage changes for key economic indicators such as the Consumer Price Index, State Accounts (including Gross State Product), Tourist Accommodation, Population Growth, Building Activity and Average Weekly Earnings in the Australian Capital Territory.

Some of the summary information in the September 1993 issue shows:

- ☐ Most economic indicators in the periods covered suggest a continued growth for the ACT economy.
- ☐ Gross State Product for the June quarter 1993 rose by 8 per cent from the previous quarter.
- ☐ Increased consumer demand is indicated by the growth seen in retail turnover and new motor vehicle registrations for the July 1993 period.
- ☐ Retail turnover for department and general stores deviates from the overall trend with a drop of 19.2 per cent from the June 1993 figure, but nevertheless has risen by 0.5 per cent since July 1992.
- ☐ May average weekly earnings increased by 2.4 per cent from April 1993 and by 3.1 per cent from May 1992. The growth in females' earnings seems to have largely contributed to this increase.
- ☐ The number of job vacancies in the ACT rose sharply in May 1993 with a 60 per cent increase (1 600) over February compared with a national increase of 1.3 per cent.



PRICES OF HOUSE BUILDING MATERIALS
1985-86 = 100



Prices of building materials — small increase for houses

In August, prices of materials used in house building rose 0.2 per cent, while prices of materials used in other forms of building were steady.

Increased prices of toilet suites, sinks and plastic pipes were the main contributors to the overall increase in house building materials. For materials used in other forms of building, price increases were offset by decreases, but there were significant price changes for non-ferrous pipes (2.3%), mains cable and circuitry (-2.0%) and ready mixed concrete (-0.6%).

Prices of materials used in house building increased by 4.7 per cent from August 1992 to August 1993. Prices of materials used in other forms of building increased by 1.1 per cent over this period.

PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS, AUGUST 1993
Percentage change

City	House building		Other than house building	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	-0.1	4.1	-0.4	-0.6
Melbourne	0.3	6.2	0.3	2.4
Brisbane	0.3	2.9	0.2	1.9
Adelaide	0.5	9.7	0.2	2.6
Perth	0.1	1.8	0.1	1.1
Hobart	0.2	2.1	0.0	2.1
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.2	4.7	0.0	1.1
Darwin	— Not available —		1.3	1.5
Canberra	0.5	5.1	0.0	1.0

For further information, order the publications *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0)* and *Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0)*, or contact Mark Dickson (06) 252 6198.

In brief ...

□ Construction activity

Total construction activity (seasonally adjusted at average 1989-90 prices) rose by 1.3 per cent in the June quarter 1993, following rises of 2.3 per cent in the March quarter 1993 and 4.5 per cent in the December quarter 1992. Most of the growth in the June quarter 1993 was attributable to public sector construction activity which rose by 3.5 per cent. Private sector construction activity rose slightly by 0.2 per cent.

Continued ...

Residential building activity grew slightly by 0.6 per cent in the June quarter 1993. With the exception of the March quarter 1993, where there was no change, this series has now shown growth in every quarter since the September quarter 1991. Current levels of residential building activity now are only 5.6 per cent below the highest level ever recorded which was in the June quarter 1989. Non-residential building activity recorded a 10.0 per cent decrease during the June quarter 1993, following growth in both the March quarter 1993 and December quarter 1992 of 3.3 per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively. Non-residential building activity in the June quarter 1993 was 45.4 per cent below the peak of activity recorded in the September quarter 1989.

Source: Construction Activity at Constant Prices, Australia, June Quarter 1993 (\$782.0).

□ Foreign trade

Merchandise imports for August 1993 were \$5 651 million, an increase of \$273 million (5%) on July 1993 and up \$1 131 million (25%) on August 1992.

The commodities recording significant increases on the previous month were: petroleum products, up \$201 million (97%) to \$408 million; miscellaneous manufactured articles, up \$36 million (10%) to \$392 million; non-monetary gold, up \$33 million (37%) to \$121 million; manufactures of metal, up \$26 million (18%) to \$165 million; specialised machinery, up \$26 million (10%) to \$282 million; and power generating machinery, up \$24 million (21%) to \$143 million.

Decreases were recorded for medicinal and pharmaceutical products, down \$22 million (17%) to \$107 million; road vehicles, down \$16 million (3%) to \$603 million; and textile fabrics, down \$15 million (7%) to \$196 million.

Australia's major commodity imports for August 1993 and their principal sources were: passenger motor vehicles (\$320 million) — Japan (75%), Germany (9%), Republic of Korea (5%) and United Kingdom (5%); crude petroleum (\$289 million) — United Arab Emirates (27%), Papua New Guinea (25%) and Saudi Arabia (19%); computers (\$206 million) — USA (40%), Taiwan (16%), Singapore (15%) and Japan (14%); parts and accessories for computers and other office equipment (\$156 million) — USA (38%), Japan (26%) and Taiwan (17%).

Source: Foreign Trade, Australia: Merchandise Imports, August 1993 (\$433.0).

□ Housing costs

Housing costs of married couple income units averaged \$98 per week, with couples purchasing their home paying \$190 per week and couples renting privately \$136. Couples which owned their home paid \$22 per week. One-parent and one-person units had housing costs of \$76 and \$46 per week respectively. As with married couples, purchasers had higher housing costs than renters, and owners had the lowest.

However, as a proportion of income, one-parent units paid relatively higher housing costs (22%) than the other income unit types. This applied across each of the major categories of housing occupancy. The group paying the lowest proportion of their income in housing costs was married couples without dependent children (11%).

Source: 1990 Survey of Income and Housing Costs and Amenities, Australia: Housing Occupancy and Costs (\$130.0).

Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
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Statistics Weekly
21 October 1993

Order from the following:

Expected releases over the fortnight to 2 November

- 20** Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, September 1993, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.70)
- 21** Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, August 1993 (6411.0; \$10.70)
Import Price Index, Australia, August 1993 (6414.0; \$8.20)
- 26** Manufacturing Production, Australia, September 1993, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.70)
- 27** Consumer Price Index, September Quarter 1993 (6401.0; \$11.70)
- 28** Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, August 1993, Preliminary (6301.0; \$10.70)

Selected releases: 13 to 19 October

General

- Publications Issued in September 1993 (1102.0; free over the counter)
- Australian Bureau of Statistics Publications to be Released in 1994 (1109.0; free over the counter)
- Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., October 1993 (1304.0; \$20.40)
- STATPAK 93, WA, 1994 (1330.5; free over the counter)

Demography

- Estimated Residential Population in Statistical Local Areas, Vic., 1992, Preliminary (3203.2; \$15.30)
- Estimated Resident Population by Age and Sex in Statistical Local Areas, WA, June 1991 (3203.5; \$13.80)

National accounts, Finance and Foreign trade

- Foreign Trade, Aust.: Merchandise Exports, August 1993 (5432.0; \$9.70)
- Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., August 1993 (5609.0; \$10.70)

Labour statistics and Prices

- Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Aust., June 1993 (6224.0; \$12.70)
- Industrial Disputes, Aust., July 1993 (6321.0; \$10.70)
- Labour Force, SA, August 1993 (6201.4; \$16.30)

Manufacturing, Mining, Energy, Service industries, Building and Construction

- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Building Materials and Fittings, August 1993 (8361.0; \$9.00)
- Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Metal Products, August 1993 (8367.0; \$7.00)
- Building Activity, Aust., June Qtr 1993 (8752.0; \$14.30)
- Building Approvals — Private Sector, Perth Statistical Division, September 1993 (8732.5; \$5.00)
- Manufacturing Industry, NT, 1989-90 (8221.7; \$10.50) — new issue
- Building Activity, ACT, June Qtr 1993 (8752.8; \$10.70)

Key national indicators	Period	Units	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National accounts						
Gross domestic product (GDP(A)) at 1989-90 prices	June qtr 93	\$m	n.a.	95 250	1.2	3.3
International accounts						
Balance on current account (b)	August 93	\$m	-1 689	-1 397	-29	-18
Balance on merchandise trade (b)	"	"	-426	-153	—	—
Balance on goods and services (b)	"	"	-727	-379	—	—
Merchandise exports	"	"	5 162	5 187	-4	10
Merchandise imports	"	"	-5 588	-5 340	2	17
Net foreign debt	30 June 93	\$m	172 325	n.a.	7.5	12.9
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	222 984	n.a.	7.2	12.2
Consumption and investment						
Retail turnover at current prices	August 93	\$m	7 660	8 155	-0.2	3.2
New capital expenditure at 1989-90 prices	June qtr 93	"	5,605	5,385	-1.3	-2.7
New motor vehicle registrations (d)	August 93	no.	52 451	51 752	15.4	17.7
Production						
Manufacturers' sales at 1989-90 prices	June qtr 93	\$m	34 296	34 540	0.9	1.2
Dwelling unit approvals	August 93	no.	15 231	14 556	-4.2	7.7
Building approvals	"	\$m	2 277	2 248	7.2	23.8
Building work done at 1989-90 prices	June qtr 93	"	6,023	6,044	-3.1	2.2
Prices						
Consumer price index	June qtr 93	1989-90 = 100.0	109.3	n.a.	0.4	1.9
Articles produced by manufacturing industry	August 93	1988-89 = 100.0	113.4	n.a.	-0.1	1.6
Materials used in manufacturing industries (e)	July 93	1984-85 = 100.0	127.2	n.a.	0.0	0.8
Labour force and demography						
Employed persons	September 93	'000	7 843.9	7 755.0	3.4	1.1
Participation rate †	"	%	63.2	62.7	1.9	0.0
Unemployment rate †	"	"	10.7	10.9	0.0	0.0
Job vacancies	August qtr 93	'000	39.0	37.3	18.0	38.9
Average weekly overtime per employee	"	hours	1.15	1.19	-0.5	8.3
Estimated resident population	December qtr 92	million	17.6	n.a.	0.2	1.1
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals	July 93	'000	247	244	-1.6	11.7
Incomes						
Company profits before income tax	June qtr 93	\$m	3 978	4 435	-1.8	-3.6
Av. weekly earnings, full-time adults; ordinary time	May qtr 93	\$	597.80	n.a.	0.7	1.8
Financial markets						
Interest rates (c) (monthly average)						
90-day bank bills †	August 93	% per annum	4.75	n.a.	-0.20	-1.15
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	6.65	n.a.	-0.25	-2.30
Exchange rate — \$US (c)	"	per \$A	0.6785	n.a.	—	—

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (c) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (d) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday 20 October 1993. (e) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 21 October 1993.
 NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Percentage change from same period previous year

Key State indicators

	Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
New capital expenditure*	March qtr 93	-0.1	4.7	-9.3	16.8	38.7	20.3	n.a.	n.a.	6.3
Retail turnover (trend estimate)	August 93	-1.8	5.5	2.5	4.2	11.3	-0.7	n.a.	6.0	2.9
New motor vehicle registrations†	August 93	14.2	4.9	17.9	9.6	21.7	34.3	-1.9	54.0	13.9
Value of dwelling unit approvals*	August 93	1.7	-0.2	8.1	18.9	21.6	6.0	92.0	-3.4	7.7
Value of total building work done	June qtr 93	-5.0	-6.1	18.6	13.0	31.3	-17.3	-6.7	-11.2	2.8
Employed persons*	September 93	0.1	0.8	1.6	0.4	4.8	0.4	0.1	3.4	1.1
Capital city consumer price index	June qtr 93	1.8	1.8	2.5	2.7	1.1	2.2	1.5	2.2	1.9
Av. weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time)	May qtr 93	0.1	2.2	5.0	1.7	-0.1	2.0	2.5	4.2	1.8
Population	Dec. qtr 92	0.9	0.5	2.5	0.5	1.2	0.5	1.0	1.5	1.1
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc.	June qtr 93	4.6	3.6	12.2	-0.6	8.3	6.0	13.3	-7.1	6.4

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.

Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 7). Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important. The ABS should be acknowledged as the source when reproducing or quoting any part of this publication.

